

Spring 92

D20-2 Contemporary Film/Video Theory
TuTh 1-3, 309 Annie May Swift (room may change)

Chuck Kleinhans
office 316 AMS
office hours Spring 93: Tu 3-5 and by appointment

Prerequisite RTF D20-1 and permission of instructor. This course presumes knowledge of D20-1, or an equivalent introductory survey of film theory

The course will examine three specific problem areas of recent film theory and connections between them through lectures giving background, discussion of readings which exemplify key arguments, and screenings of works which illustrate or challenge the theory.

The course begins with consideration of some basic texts in contemporary film theory highlighting concepts such as counter-cinema, psychoanalysis, postmodernism, and gender and race difference. Next the course turns to studies of two unresolved matters--various attempts to theorize slasher and horror films, and the place/concept of "white" in racial/ethnic/multicultural analysis. Then the attempt to summarize and standardize recent film theory will be considered with a critical reading of two recent handbooks on film theory.

A typical class will consist of a lecture giving background and discussing major concepts followed by a class discussion of the assigned reading for the day. Readings will be presented by members of the class; by means of a one page essay. (A written copy is due to the instructor) Students are expected to actively participate in discussion and have read and prepared the readings and have them present during discussion.

Students are expected to do some additional outside reading amounting to about 5 or 6 articles or book chapters within the context of the course. Group studies with individual papers are possible. For example, a group of students might do readings around feminist analyses of vampires and share common screenings of videos.

Assigned writing

when assigned: one page report on class reading

Tu Apr 20
****due in class, summary of outside reading****

2 page max summary of an article in contemporary film theory. Criteria: accurate summary, and short comment on end regarding its relevance.

Th May 13
****due in class: speculative essay on theory of horror or white**** (copies)
5 page essay on what you see as a theoretical issue in the discussion of horror or white. Criteria: ability to digest and synthesize from readings, and ability to take the ideas further and/or critique a problem with them. (See next assignment)

Tu June 1
****Close analysis paper due****
5 page essay, plus illustrative frames. A close analysis of a scene chosen in consultation with Chuck. You will develop an analysis making explicit the theoretical argument involved. (This may be an extension of the speculative essay)

Wed. June 9 noon.
Final exam--take home from questions on Stam and Lapsley books. Some additional reading required (e.g., from Aumont)

Required texts (available at Norris Center Store; ordered late, will arrive late; be patient)

Robert Stam, Robert Burgoyne, and Sandy Flitterman-Lewis, *New Vocabularies in Film Semiotics: Structuralism, Post-Structuralism, and Beyond* (NY: Routledge, 1992)

Robert Lapsley and Michael Westlake, *Film Theory: An Introduction* (Manchester: Manchester UP; NY: St. Martin's, 1997)

Some additional readings will be available at Quartet Copies. Also, there will be a one time xerox fee of \$2.00 payable to Chuck for bibliography and other handouts. You will receive 40 pages of material or a refund on the balance.

The following book has been ordered at Norris for suggested reading:

Jacques Aumont, et al., *Aesthetics of Film*, tr. & rev. Richard Neupert (Austin: U of Texas Press, 1992 [1983]).

It is assumed that the student has read from the first part of the course: Kaja Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics*, and has a copy of Philip Rosen, ed., *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology: A Film Theory Reader*. Copies may still be available at Great Expectations Bookstore on Foster St.

Tu Mar 30
background review

Th April 1
begin readings (below) and view *Young Mr. Lincoln* (U Library Media Center)
the postmodern text
screen: Jean-Luc Godard, *Masculin-Feminine* (RTF) critical screening with commentary by Kleinhans.

Tu April 6
read:
Bordwell on Classic Hollywood Film
eds. of *Cahiers du cinéma*, on *Young Mr. Lincoln*

Th April 8
outside screening: *Morocco* (media center)
screen: excerpts from von Sternberg, *Morocco*
read:
Cahiers du cinéma, *Morocco*
[ghost text: Mulvey, VP&NC]

Tu April 13
read:
MacCabe on realism
Wollen on *Wind From the East*

Th April 15
screening: Juan Downey, *Through the Looking Glass* (video)
read:
Heath on Narrative Space

Tu Apr 20
****due in class, summary of outside reading****
intro to psychoanalysis
Read
Bertrand Augst, "The Turn to Psychoanalysis"
screening: Sherry Millner, *Out of the Mouths of Babes* (video)

Th April 22
read

Christian Metz, "The Fiction Film and Its Spectator" (in Rosen)

Tu April 27

outside screening, TBA, Truth Or Dare

read

Dyer, "White"

screening: Pam Tom, Two Lies

Th April 29

read

Brophy on Horrorality

Creed on Horror and the Monstrous-Feminine

Tu May 4

read:

Mercer on Thriller

hooks and others on Madonna, etc.

screening: Thriller

Th May 6

read

Clover on Gender in the Slasher film

screening: Slumber Party Massacre

Tu May 11

discuss Clover

read

Creed, Phallic Panic

screen: excerpts from Dead Ringers

Th May 13

****due in class: speculative essay on theory of horror or white**** (copies)

Tu May 18

read: Lapsley /Westlake

Th May 20

read: Lapsley/Westlake

****Sat May 22, Frame Grabbing Party at Chuck's****

Tu May 25

read: Stam/Burgoyne/Flitterman-Lewis

Th May 27

no class, prepare close readings paper

Tu June 1

****Close analysis paper due****

course evaluation

final exam questions handed out (on Lapsley and Stam books)

Th June 3
finish Stam et al
David Bordwell (exerpts)
Noel Carroll (exerpts)

Wed. June 9 noon

take home final exam: due